

## **Adult Protective Services (APS) Update**

February, 2012

### NASUAD report

I am pleased to provide the Evaluation of the Vermont Adult Protective Services conducted by Maria Greene, Senior Consultant with the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD). I invite you to read it, think about it, discuss it and give us your feedback.

As you'll see, the findings support

- our new management structure and staff utilization
- our system for prioritizing field investigation of allegations,
- our acquisition of an adequate data system that will allow for data driven decision-making

The consultant re-iterates the lack of national standards for staffing, workloads, investigative practices and training. Our current caseload averages are midway among states most similar to us: Maine 1/25; Vermont 1/35; Delaware 1/40. New Hampshire has a dual system of casework (1/29) and new investigations (1/65).

Among other recommendations, the report challenges us to

- make better use of available tools
- re-visit the after hours protocols in place since 2001
- strengthen our community partnerships

With the help of the DAIL Advisory Board, we have begun the process of rebuilding those partnerships. The Board has created an APS Advisory subcommittee to review the recommendations and to invite public participation in its meetings. The next meeting will be held on March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Comfort Inn in Barre from 2-4 pm and all are welcome to attend.

I have asked the chair of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee to schedule testimony on the report and on H. 290. The legislature has historically provided oversight of administrative agencies and it is our hope they will agree to do so again.

### Litigation

It is unfortunate that VLA and DRVt chose the adversarial path of suing DAIL. The lawsuit has interrupted what had been a productive dialogue between DAIL and VLA/DRVt. Throughout 2011, DAIL and the plaintiffs worked cooperatively together to improve APS services for Vermont's vulnerable adults. APS services, particularly the assessment of incoming reports of abuse and the timeliness of investigations, improved throughout 2011.

The process remains in the hands of the court.